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BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

13, 14, and 15, therefore will be used now for the exhibition of pictures given by Mr. Hearn or purchased out of the Hearn Fund. They testify most convincingly to Mr. Hearn's untiring generosity and also to his unceasing encouragement of American painters. The rapid growth and completeness of our collection of pictures by living Americans is due very largely to Mr. Hearn's munificence.

The list of pictures in the last gift is as follows:

Open Sea.....	Emil Carlsen
Quadroon.....	George Fuller
Spring.....	Lillian M. Genth
Northeaster.....	Winslow Homer
Evening, Medfield.....	George Inness
Louise.....	Alphonse Jongers
Gitana.....	John S. Sargent

Edith.....	J. J. Shannon
Moonrise.....	D. W. Tryon
Pleiades.....	Elihu Vedder
Harrower.....	Horatio Walker
Adirondacks.....	Alexander H. Wyant

On account of the lack of time before the BULLETIN goes to press, no detailed mention of these pictures can be made in this month's issue. It must suffice now to call attention to four famous works which of themselves make a most noteworthy collection. These are the magnificent "Northeaster," by Winslow Homer, considered by many to be his best work; "Forenoon in the Adirondacks," one of the most prominent among the works of Wyant and eagerly sought after by collectors, the Inness and the Fuller.



QUADROON
BY GEORGE FULLER

PERSIAN CARPETS

THE highest point in the development of Persian carpet weaving was reached, it is commonly admitted, in those productions having animals and human figures as decorative motives. These carpets are generally, but not quite accurately, called "hunting

carpets." Certain modern theorists look with disfavor upon the use of motives taken directly from nature, especially from animal life, as themes of pure decoration. It is true that in Europe the textile arts have often been arrested in their development because of a predilection at an early stage for naturalistic motives in imitation of paintings, and yet used purely as decora-

tion of flat surfaces. In the East the choice of such motives, taken from animal and human life, was reached only after a long development, and the difficulties attending this problem have been solved with the extraordinary feeling for pure decoration characteristic of the Orient. This fondness for the narrative motive is the inevitable expression in terms of art of the imagination and poetry that entered so largely into the lives of the Oriental people.

The Museum has been so fortunate as to acquire at the sale of the Yerkes collection three carpets with animal motives in their designs, which represent this remarkable type of rug in three different stages of its development from the end of the fifteenth to the early seventeenth century.

The dating of Persian rugs is a difficult problem, the solution of which has been approached only in recent years. It is easy to say whether a rug dates before or after the eighteenth century, but to give the exact time of its production in the three preceding centuries is exceedingly difficult, since rugs are very seldom dated, and designs are often traditional, continuing unchanged for several centuries. Wilhelm Bode¹ was the first to bring system into the dating and localizing of old carpets through the evidence supplied by European paintings in which rugs are reproduced—especially Italian and Flemish paintings from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. At the same time, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, English, Austrian, and German scholars—notably those who contributed to the large Vienna publication entitled *Oriental Carpets, published by the Imperial and Royal Austrian Commercial Museum. English edition edited by Sir C. Purdon Clarke. Vienna, 1892*—and, more recently, American connoisseurs have determined, from their knowledge of the modern industries, the most important centers of the old productions. Only a year ago F. R. Martin, the distinguished Swedish connoisseur, published an important work, *Oriental Carpets*, in which a great advance in the study of old carpet weaving has been made through the help given by dated works in

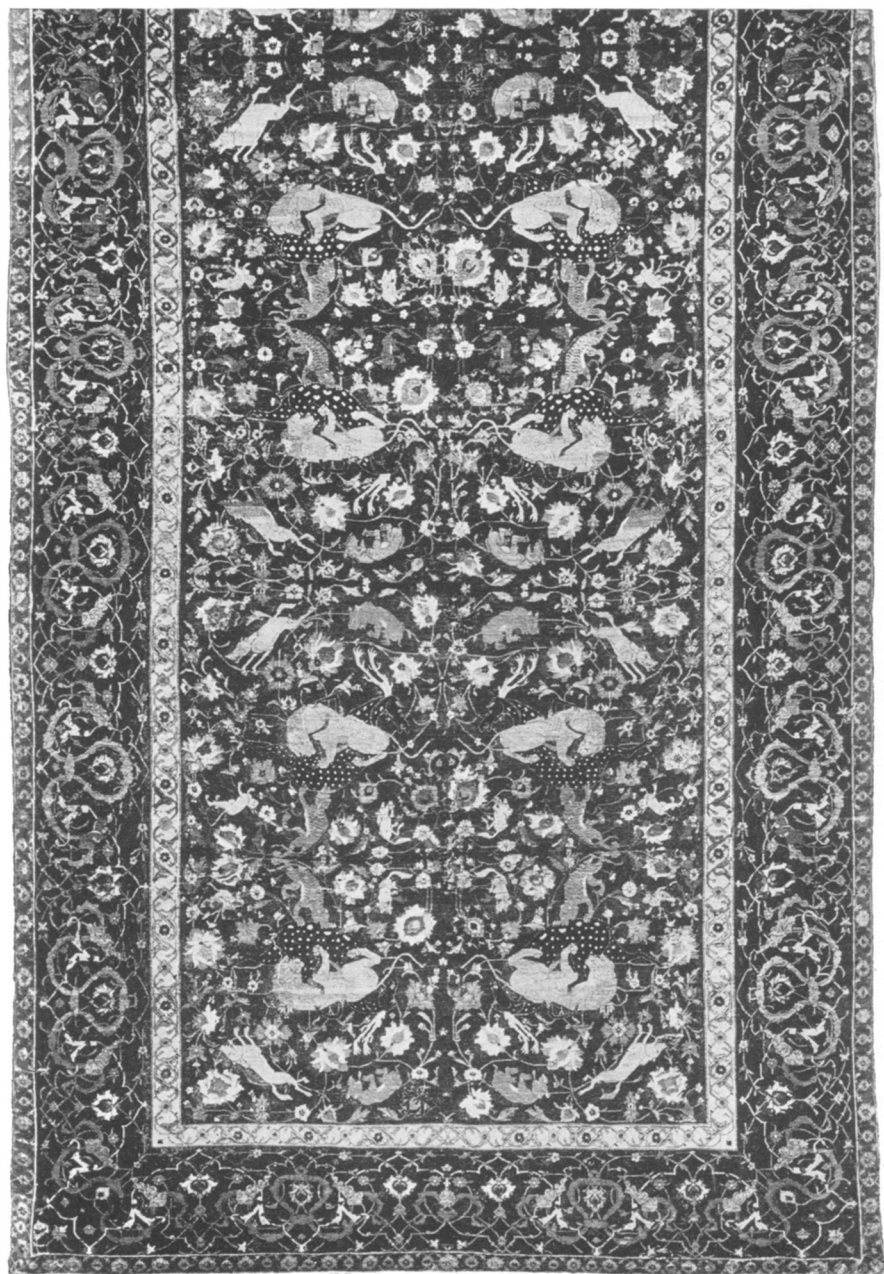
other industrial arts of the near Orient, such as the pottery, manuscripts, ivories, etc.

The oldest of the three carpets recently purchased² is at the same time the most important from an historical point of view. It is the largest in size of the three, and is decorated with Chinese motives. The pattern seems, at first sight, overladen and restless considering the large size of the carpet, but it must be remembered that rugs like this were not intended to be seen at a distance, but at close range. As these rugs—often the only decoration in the room of a mosque or palace—were used to sit on, the eye took in only one small part, which, although connected with the whole, was in itself a complete composition. As the patterns in the large rugs are hardly ever larger in scale than those found in the rugs of a smaller compass—like the Ardebil carpet in the Museum's possession, for example—these latter rugs perhaps may be more pleasing to our modern taste, but if we study in the larger rugs one decorative field after the other, we are astonished at the number and richness of the beautiful motives connected one with the other by a marvelous rhythm of line and color. Rarely in works of the other arts is there to be found in such purity this quality of rhythm in which the same motive repeats at certain intervals, always changing a little the color or line so that the eye never wearies and an idea of infinity arises. From an historical point of view the rug is remarkable through the diverse decorative elements which are to be found in it in greater number perhaps than in any other of the older type. Not only the Chinese clouds and the Tschi symbol are repeated in different shapes again and again, but the shields show, alternately, the Chinese motives of four lions playing and the fight of the phoenix with the dragon. From this circumstance the rug has been known in literature on the subject as the "Rug with the coat-of-arms of the Ming Dynasty."

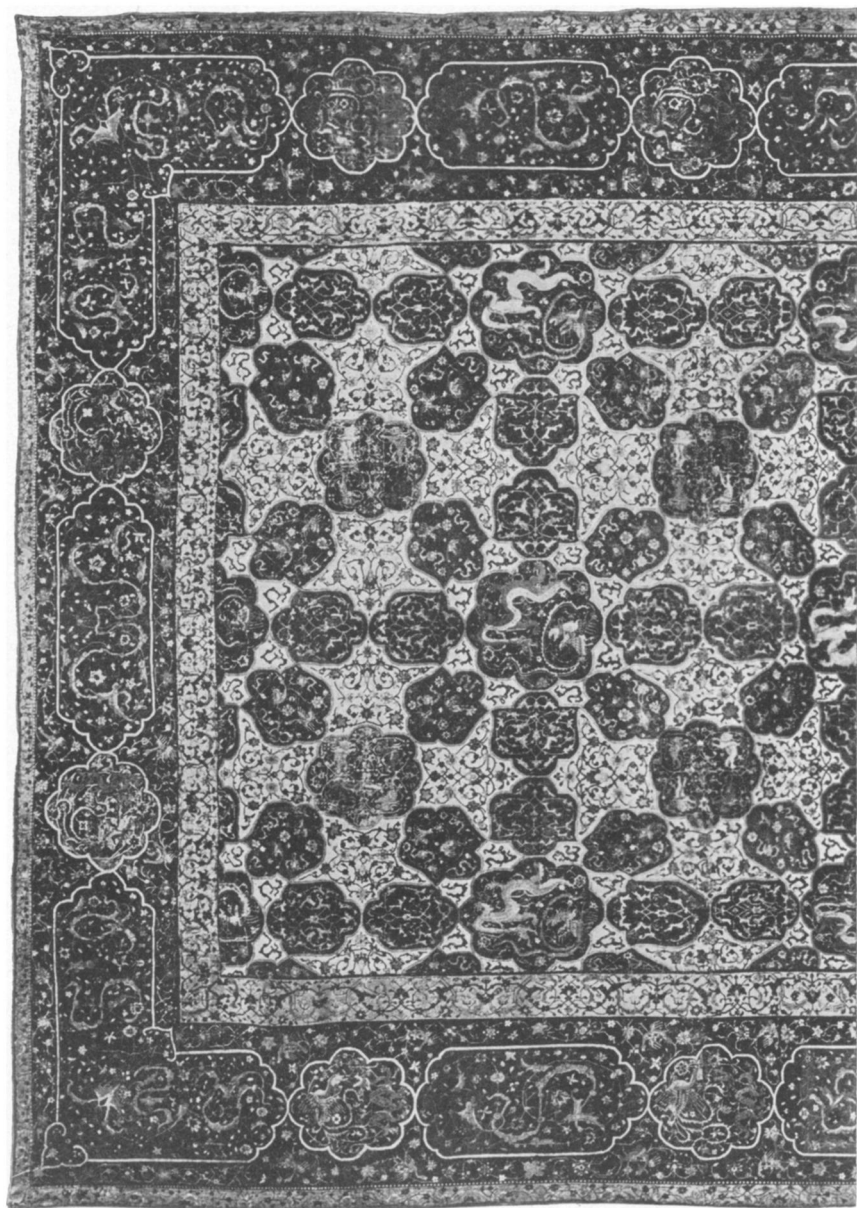
A companion piece to our rug exists in the Museum at Lyons (the rug in the pos-

² For a detailed description of this and the other two rugs, the reader is referred to John Kimberly Mumford's excellent catalogue of the Yerkes sale.

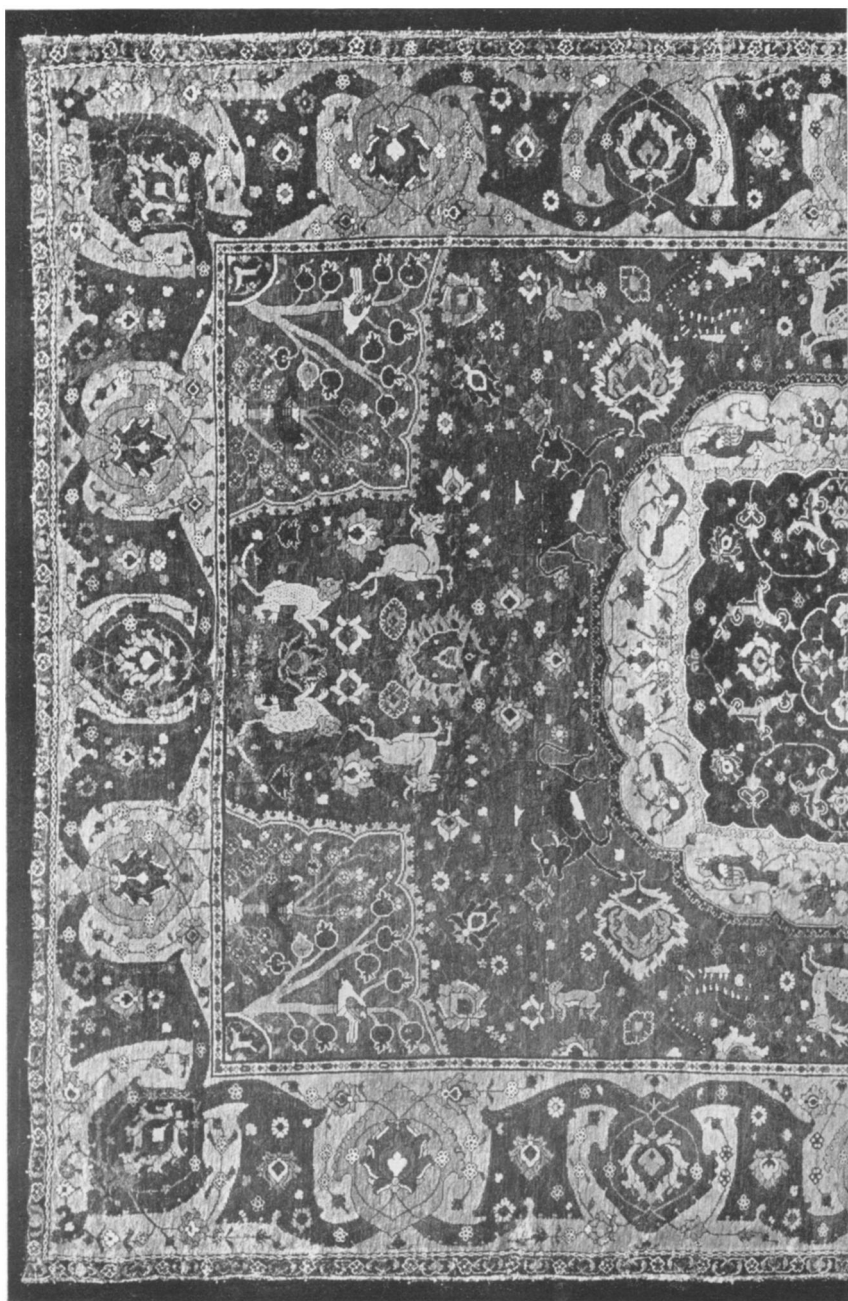
¹ Vorderasiatische Knüpftteppiche.



CARPET (DETAIL)
NORTH PERSIA, MIDDLE OF SIXTEENTH CENTURY
FROM THE ARDEBIL MOSQUE



BAGDAD CARPET (DETAIL)
NORTH PERSIA, ABOUT 1500



CARPET (DETAIL)
NORTHWEST PERSIA, ABOUT 1600

session of the Countess Clam-Gallas, at Vienna, which has been mentioned in this connection is different in type). Our carpet is closely related to the large animal rug in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, both in color as well as in motives. On account of the number of Chinese elements in the design, and the rarity of the white ground, which seems to be characteristic in the oldest types of rugs, F. R. Martin assigns both rugs to the Timurid period, assigning ours to the end of this period—about 1490—fixing the date from a manuscript which was executed in the same style in 1490 for the Sultan Mirza Ali of Gilan.

It has been said that this rug was made at Bagdad in the sixteenth century, but this is hardly correct, since Bagdad, at this time in the possession of the Turks, was not known as an important place of carpet weaving. The reasons which Martin gives for a North Persian provenance are much more convincing, as Gilan is the place where, a few years later, most of the important works for the court of the Safavids were made.

There is no need of calling attention to the beauty of the rug from the Ardebil Mosque. It is quite perfect in drawing as well as in color: The lively movements of the animals are rendered with the greatest freedom of drawing, and the art by which the complicated positions of the animals is represented on the flat surface is no less remarkable. The colors are unusually deep and rich, especially the black of the gazelles and the dark blue of the border, which make a beautiful contrast to the warm red of the background. The deep colors are brightened by the yellow of the lions, the delicate pale green of the boars, and the white peony flowers, executed in silver threads, which are scattered over the whole composition.

There exists an exact companion piece to this rug in the collection of Dr. F. Sarre, of Berlin, which also came from the Ardebil Mosque. Five rugs are known to have been in this mosque: two large ones—of which one is at the South Kensington Museum, and the other was sold at the Yerkes sale—and three smaller ones—our

recent acquisition, its companion piece in Berlin, and the silk rug with the tree of life formerly in the Yerkes collection. It is more than likely that the two large rugs, as well as ours and its companion piece, were all executed at the same time under the reign of the second Shah of the Safavids, Thamasp I (1524-76), in the capital of his empire, Ardebil. The large carpet in London is dated 1539. As to whether ours was done a short time before or after opinions differ. It probably dates a little earlier, about 1520-1530.

The third animal rug, which is similar in style to the one already owned by the Museum, belongs undoubtedly to the last period of the hunting carpets, about 1600 or a little later. The border, with its geometrical curves, is archaistic in style, but the arabesques in the center field are in the style of the best period. The drawing of the animals is heavy in comparison with that of the other two rugs, and the color a little hard. The reds and greens suggest the so-called Ispahan type and show certain influence from Herat. The yellow, on the other hand, as Mr. Mumford rightly observes, is a color used by the Kurds. It is probable, therefore, that the carpet was woven in the northwestern part of Persia.

The largest of the Museum's rugs has been in the possession of Vincent Robinson and then of A. Thien in Berlin. It has been published by Vincent Robinson in *Eastern Carpets*, 1882, and by W. Bode in *Vorderasiatische Knüpfteppiche* (fig. 25). The other two have also passed through the hands of Vincent Robinson and have been published, the earlier one by Stebbing, in *The Holy Carpet of the Mosque at Ardebil*, and the other by W. Bode, in the above-mentioned book (fig. 13).

W. R. V.

CRETAN REPRODUCTIONS

IN the February number of the BULLETIN for 1908 was published an account of our collection representing Greek prehistoric art, now exhibited in Gallery 20. This collection, from force of circumstances, consists mostly of reproductions, because, as is well